



## **TESTIMONY FOR HB0842 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE - INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS**

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Taveras

**Committee:** Appropriations

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0842 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

As Maryland transforms its energy economy from one driven by fossil fuels to one driven by clean energy, one of the most important goals should be to turn around the devastation that fossil fuels and poor infrastructure decisions have wreaked on overburdened and underserved communities. And that goal can only be achieved if we prioritized spending money on those communities.

This bill, if enacted, would make that prioritization clear. It requires that whenever federal funds are spent on infrastructure construction projects, that 40% of those funds are spent on overburdened and underserved communities and that an additional 40% of those funds to infrastructure construction projects in communities of color and communities with a high percentage of low- to moderate-income households in the state. Infrastructure projects shall be prioritized based on whether the infrastructure construction project:

- advances environmental justice;
- incorporates labor and workforce standards including: Project labor agreements, Targeted hire provisions for workers residing in overburdened and underserved communities; or Wage standards;
- promotes apprenticeship programs;
- promotes the adaptation of infrastructure to climate change;
- reduces greenhouse gas emissions.

In order to facilitate this, a Justice 40 Committee that will identify infrastructure deficiencies in overburdened communities, underserved communities, communities of color, and communities with a high percentage of low- to moderate-income households and recommend infrastructure construction projects covered under any federal program. They will also provide guidelines for the use of federal funds.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report in committee.

